

1557

Hans Staden publishes his *Warhaftig Historia*, dedicated to Landgrave Philipp of Hesse and introduced by Johann Dryander, professor of medicine at Marburg

A German Mamluk in Colonial Brazil?

Together with André Thevet's *Les Singularités de la France Antarctique* (Paris, 1557) and Jean de Léry's *Histoire d'un Voyage fait en la terre de Brésil* (Geneva, 1578), Hans Staden's *Warhaftig Historia und beschreibung eyner Landschafft der Wilden/Nackten/Grimmigen Menschenfresser Leuthen, in der Newenwelt America gelegen* (Marburg 1557; *True History and Description of a Landscape of Savage, Naked, Fierce, Cannibalistic People Located in the New World America*) is one of the most remarkable narratives that ended the early period of European Americana dominated by Christopher Columbus's and Amerigo Vespucci's letters. Yet while the accounts of Staden, Léry, and Thevet are all based on travel experiences in Brazil at the time the French were seeking to break the Portuguese monopoly there (1555–1560), the publication of Staden's book alone was not motivated by the colonial project of a *France Antarctique*. Both the singular composition and the successful printing history of Staden's book can be traced to this conjunction of a colonial experience and a non-colonial context of publication. His narrative and ethnography of colonial Brazil is shaped by both the traveler's unique cross-cultural experience among the Tupinamba Indians and by the restrictions imposed on authorship in Protestant Hesse.

In the 16th century, German imprints represented a surprising share among European Americana, a fact that suggests that the link between the new print technology and colonialism was more complex and diverse than has previously been assumed. Germany was not among early modern colonial powers and, except for the Welser enterprise in Venezuela (1528–1546), was never directly engaged in the colonization of the Americas. New World narratives traditionally issued from presses in Augsburg, Strasbourg, and Nuremberg, merchant centers connected to Iberian overseas ventures by both dynastic politics and finance. However, the popularity of German travel accounts in pamphlets, cosmographies, and collections did not dissipate with the end of the personal union of the Habsburgs during the reign of Charles V, nor with the decline of the banking houses of Fugger and Welser. Printed within the boundaries and under the auspices of a Lutheran prince, Philipp of Hesse, who had no business interests overseas, the *Warhaftig Historia* became an extraordinary publishing success and went through numerous editions, translations, and reprints.

On the German book market, physicians and Protestant reformers assumed the task of transmitting the earliest news from America to a broad lay audience. Published in Reformation Hesse, edited and introduced by Johannes Dryander, professor of medicine at the Protestant university of Marburg, Staden's book stands in this tradition of German New World imprints. It is no accident that physicians, who played a prominent role in the elaboration of new

empirical methods of inquiry, would turn to editing travel literature, especially about new worlds. In the absence of textual sources, empirical study of New World wonders in their own right was necessary. The editions and translations of travel collections into the vernacular issued by Jobst Ruchamer (Nuremberg, 1508), Michael Herr (Strasbourg, 1534), and Lorenz Fries (Strasbourg, 1525–1531) exemplify the contribution physicians made in popularizing New World reports. The reformulation of the genre's representational tasks was marked by the tension between an impulse toward systematization and methodology and an emphasis on the authority of firsthand narratives. Before the physician and Humanist Theodor Zwinger published *Methodus apodemica* in Basel (1577; *Method for Travelers*), Dryander responded to the paradoxical task of systematizing empirical knowledge by dividing Staden's travel book into a personal narrative (*Historia*) and an impersonal description (*Beschreibung*). Although the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss has called Jean de Léry's *Histoire* the first "breviary of the ethnographer," it is Staden's book and its mixture of travel narrative and systematic description that most clearly anticipates the textual structure of modern ethnographies.

In the hands of Protestant publicists, America was reinterpreted as a new Revelation. Cosmographic writing, traditionally a commentary to the book of Genesis, now was seen as empirical evidence for an actively present Providential God. Thus the Protestant postulate of an active God entailed a theological justification for empirical observation and reconceptualized firsthand narratives as potential venues of divine Revelation. However, this conceptual shift also created the rhetorical problem of reconciling personal and divine testimony. One solution resorted to allegorization, as illustrated by the recasting of Hans Staden's return to Hesse as an exemplary narrative of personal salvation. In the theological debate over America, which had enormous implications for monogenetic theory and the doctrine of original sin, confessional differences determined the lines of interpretation. Catholics held that the tarnished body of the Roman Church should be restored through missionary work; Martin Luther saw in the experience of the New World proof *ex negativo* of the election and redemption of believers not fallen from Grace, a view presupposed by the narrative frame of exemplarity that shapes Staden's account. Deepened insight into divine creation was the aim of Sebastian Franck's cosmography (Tübingen, 1534), as well as its revised edition by Sigmund Feyerabend (Frankfurt, 1567) and the reprints of travels by Levinus Hulsius (Nuremberg, 1598–1650). The most famous collection, Theodore de Bry's *America* (Frankfurt, 1590–1635), used its lavish iconography and recycling of New World reports, including the *Historia*, for anti-Catholic propaganda. With its oddly ambivalent image of American Indians, it would inextricably weave together travel writing and religious dissent and establish the basis for the Enlightenment invention of the "noble savage."

Both reformers and physicians helped to establish cannibalism as an emblem of America, and particularly of Brazil. An entry in a German bookseller's catalogue at the Frankfurt book fair of 1567 refers to the *Historia* as the

"Menschenfresserbuch" (book of cannibals), indicating that its popular appeal derived in part from this aspect of the narrative. The English minister and editor Samuel Purchas, refusing to "glutton" his readers with such "savage arguments," and reproaching the traveler for "telling . . . only his tragedies," banished the *Historia*, already "englished," from his vast collection (*Purchas his Pilgrims*, London, 1625). Although Staden's book fed European readers' appetites for the exotic, it moved away from the alimentary cannibalism established early on by Columbus and Vespucci and disseminated by Fries's *Carta Marina* and Sebastian Münster's *Cosmographia* (Basel, 1544). Images of a butcher chopping up bodies or roasting dismembered parts had singled out America as the land of cannibals on every map. The *Historia* subverts this view, reflected in the narrator's conventional expectation of being killed and eaten right away, by emphatically transferring cannibalism to the realm of customs. Elaborate descriptions of the rites and ceremonies of capture, captivity, and execution of enemies revive the chivalric notion of a cannibalism of vengeance. References to the ritual as a "feast" and "merrymaking" relate it to the festivals of European popular culture. In contrast to comparisons between Tupinamba cannibalism and the Catholic Eucharist proliferating in the pamphlets of Protestant satirists of the theophagic Roman liturgy, and echoed in Michel de Montaigne's famous essay "Of Cannibals" (Bordeaux, 1590), in Staden's *Historia* cannibalism figures as a "carnival." Whether a reminiscence of medieval Catholicism or a marker of Protestant self-fashioning, the *Historia*'s borrowing from the ritual reversals and oppositional practices of European carnivals in its depiction of Tupinamba cannibalism, if only occasionally, undercuts the sensationalist attributions announced in the book's title. The conventional representation is contradicted by the assertion that, except for their nakedness and their sun-tanned skins, "the Tupinamba are a fine people . . . just like the people here at home" (*WH*, 162).

The title page of Staden's small quarto shifts the novelty of its subject matter from the "discovery" of America to the "Revelation" of its meaning within the territorial state of Hesse. Within this framework, the travel writer figures as both the recipient and the vehicle of divine Revelation. Responding to the lack of a previously established context for such a report and to the new demands of Protestant cosmography, the title's emphasis on the discursive authority of the narrator also privatizes the traveler. It is allegedly through his own experience and at his expense that the report is issued. Nonetheless, the credibility of the *Historia* also relies on the dual authority of the lordly dedicatee, Landgrave Philipp of Hesse, and the scholarly editor, professor of medicine Johannes Dryander. In this sense, the double reference to the figure of the private traveler and to the institutional realms of the absolutist state signals the constitutive paradox of Hans Staden's book. The travel account, whose first-person narrator acquires unprecedented amplification, is also subject to extraordinary surveillance and control.

In the long, authorizing preface, the physician-editor states that the return-

ing traveler was interrogated and scrutinized by local authorities, including himself and the prince. Presented as a token of the traveler's gratitude for his salvation and as a gift to the landgrave, the book itself stands as material evidence for the complex process of social reconciliation. As a form of public confession, fully congenial with a profession of faith, the *Historia* effects the traveler's reintegration into the religious community. By framing the *Historia* as an exemplum of justification by faith, Staden brings the narrative into compliance with the principle that the choice of belief and worship is a prerogative of the prince. This endows the narrative with great political significance. The transformation of a mercenary soldier into a pious author and loyal subject is thus both the precondition and the effect of Staden's book. Yet, although the book's publication is predicated on the normative interpretation of the traveler's return as salvation, the text itself is not exhausted by its function as an exemplary tale. The *Historia* contains claims that move away from the prolegomena of the book and acquire specific meaning only with reference to colonial Brazil.

The *Warhaftig Historia* comprises reports about two voyages. On his first voyage (1547–1548), Hans Staden leaves Lisbon as a gunner on a Portuguese commercial vessel. On his second voyage (1549–1555), the traveler sets sail from Seville in Spain to Rio de la Plata in Argentina. After suffering shipwreck and wandering for two years in the wilderness, he becomes the chief commander of a Portuguese fort off the coast of São Vicente, one of the earliest colonial settlements in Brazil. Upon completing two years in the service of the Portuguese king, Dom Manuel, the traveler is captured by the Tupinamba Indians. Thus, it is the specific historical situation of local warfare and European competition, including the alliances between Portuguese and Tupiniquim, French and Tupinamba, which lead to the traveler's captivity. Eventually he avoids being killed by performing native roles and adhering to Tupinamba forms of life; he changes his identity from that of a Portuguese enemy to that of a French friend of the Tupinamba. As a consequence of his success in mobilizing divine forces through prayer and of the felicity of religious claims he proffers in the native language, he is recognized by the Tupinamba as someone imbued with prophetic powers. In the end, the traveler is granted permission to sail back to Europe on a French ship.

In the experience of the *Historia*'s protagonist, we can observe a parallel to the so-called Brazilian Mamluk. Usually born of a Portuguese or Mamluk father and an Indian mother, this figure underwent a double acculturation process, straddling a Christian and native way of life. In travelogues of the East, such as Ludovico di Varthema's widely translated *Itinerario* (Rome 1510), the term designated Christians and others who converted to Islam. In the *Historia*, the term Mamluk acquires the specific meaning of someone who merges two different cultures. It is eloquently exemplified by the ambivalent figure of the traveler-narrator, assimilated to the native way of life, while striving to keep his Christian identity. The reversals of European perceptions that result from this

position are depicted not only in the captivity narrative, but also in the plentiful original woodcut illustrations in Staden's book. One of the most suggestive images shows the traveler-narrator standing in a canoe observing a European caravel from the same perspective as the Indians, from whom he is distinguished only by his beard. Although the traveler's attempts to deny that he is a Portuguese enemy are rebuked with irony by his captors, his performance among the Tupinamba warriors in a battle against former Portuguese friends, in which he makes proper use of native weapons and language, marks the beginning of his status reversal. His new identity, earned through acts of warfare, healing, and prophecy, is at once distinguished from and conflated with his Christian identity. In the healing sessions, the traveler combines distinctive Tupinamba practices with the power attributed to his words of prayer. As he slips into the roles of Tupinamba healer and prophet, he seems not only to have taken on the perspective of others, but also to have made them his own. Of course, the overriding narrative of the *Historia* is oriented toward the traveler's return to Protestant Hesse, and thus implies that the traveler is not a crossover. This in no way diminishes the claim that the traveler has contingently become, if not Tupinamba, at least a Mamluk "skilled and experienced in both the Savage and Christian people's tongues and motions" (*WH*, 74).

Although controlled by the Hessian authorities of prince and university, the travel narrator's discursive authority rests on both his self-fashioning as pious author and his ability to mobilize divine forces in the language of the Tupinamba. It is not by faith alone, but by his cross-cultural experience and active translation of his God's power, that the traveler is transformed from a Portuguese prisoner into a friend and prophet of the Tupinamba. Although the exemplarity of the *Historia* as a tale of salvation depends on the normalizing frame outlined in the preface, it reaches beyond this frame toward new possibilities of identity formation. In the traveler's closing words, "I have given him [the skeptical reader] information enough; let him follow my tracks, for the world is closed to none whom God assists" (*WH*, 198). Officially legitimated as a testimony of salvation, Hans Staden's *Historia* discloses a space for the wild stories of a German Mamluk in colonial Brazil.

See also 1478, 1622, 1647/1656, 1797

Bibliography: Rudolf Hirsch, "Printed Reports on the Early Discoveries and Their Early Reception," in Fredi Chiapelli et al., eds., *First Images of America: The Impact of the New World on the Old* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976). Michael Harbsmeier, "Neue Welten," in *Wilde Völkerkunde: Andere Welten in deutschen Reiseberichten der Frühen Neuzeit* (Frankfurt am Main and New York: Campus, 1994). Wolfgang Neuber, "Die Drucke der im Original deutschen Amerikareiseberichte bis 1715: Synopse, Bibliographie und marktgeschichtlicher Kommentar," *Frühneuzeit-Info*, vol. 2, no. 1 (1991): 76–83, and vol. 2, no. 2 (1991): 12–34. Silvia Schmitz, "Reisende Helden: Zu Hans Staden, Erec und Tristan," in Thomas Kramer, ed., *Wege in die Neuzeit* (Munich: Fink, 1988). Hans Staden, *Hans Stadens Warhaftige Historia*, ed. and trans. Reinhard Maack and Karl Fouquet (Marburg: Trautvetter & Fischer, 1964). ———, *The True History of His Captivity, 1557*, ed. and trans. Malcolm Letts (New York: McBride, 1929).

Luciana Villas-Bôas

 1570

Johann Fischart's polemical treatise against the Jesuit Jacob Rabe inaugurates his work of satire, Protestant engagement, and political vision

Ethical Utopianism and Stylistic Excess

A few years before he translated François Rabelais' *Gargantua* (1575)—the work for which he is best known—into German, Johann Fischart (1546–1590) published the first of many polemical treatises against the Roman Catholic Church, and especially against the Jesuits, under the title *Nacht Rab oder Nebelkrähe. Von dem uberauß Jesuwidrischen Geistlosen schreiben unnd leben des Hans Jacob Gackels, der sich nennt Rab* (1570; *Night Raven or Hooded Crow: On the Exceedingly Stupid and Antichristian Life and Writings of Hans Jacob Rooster, Also Known as Raven*). Printed shortly after his return from a study trip to Italy in the newly established print workshop of his sister's husband, Bernhard Jobin, this text marks the start of Fischart's career as a prolific writer, polemicist, and compiler. The attack on Jacob Rabe, a Jesuit, is an early example of Fischart's unique rhetorical style, his religious and political engagement, and highly productive collaboration with the printer Jobin.

Fischart's denunciation of Rabe, which appeared at a time of fierce discussions surrounding the election of a new bishop in Strasbourg, employs a range of rhetorical strategies. He satirizes the practices and habits of the Jesuits; he recounts anecdotes and rumors; and he appeals to and provokes anti-Catholic sentiment in his characterization of Rabe and Jesuits in general. His choice to publish the text anonymously inaugurates a lifelong practice of publishing sometimes anonymously, sometimes under a pseudonym, and sometimes under his own name. The tradition of compilation, montage of anecdotes, and denunciation had existed since the early days of the Protestant Reformation. Fischart, however, together with the printer Jobin and graphic artist Tobias Stimmer, developed it further. This team produced not only polemical treatises but also several series of pamphlets and fliers which exploit the abundant technical possibilities, rhetorical force, and publicity opportunities inherent in print media. Fischart provided the narrative and explanation to Stimmer's illustrations critical of the Roman Church (1577, *Der Gorgonisch Meduse Kopf; Medusa's Gorgon Head*) or, time and again, the order of the Jesuits. His reports on the fate of the Huguenots in the religious wars in France, *Reveille Matin: oder Wacht frü auf* (1575; *Morning Call: Or, Wake Up Early*), as well as his attacks on Catherine de Medici show his ardent religious and political engagement.

Scholars have pointed out that Fischart's work—in contrast, for example, to Paracelsus's—does not follow medieval patterns of allegorical thought based, essentially, on similitude and analogy. Instead, Fischart's writings combine practices of semiological dissociation and reconfiguration that anticipate a modern attitude toward the world of signs. Irony, satire, comedy, and the carnivalesque also combine, on a more general level, with his distinctive practices of translation, compilation, and adaptation. By taking full advantage of the